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What “Kindergarten Ready” Means: Perspectives from Teachers and Caregivers

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What “Kindergarten Ready” Means: Perspectives from Teachers and Caregivers

by

Holly Johnson

A Thesis

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of

St. Cloud State University

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Abstract

Every year a number of children move on to Kindergarten, regardless if they are ready or not. There are always some who are ready and have great academic and social-emotional skills to start; however, there are also those who are not ready and have not had the experiences to successfully prepare them for Kindergarten. To help children become ready for Kindergarten, they need experiences and support from their parents, teachers, and community. In this study, a survey research design was used to examine the perspectives of caregivers and preschool/ Kindergarten teachers to determine if they are looking at the same things for what they believe it means to be school ready. Overall, the caregivers and teachers reported very similar findings. They both believe social-emotional readiness is more important than academic readiness when entering kindergarten.

Acknowledgments

I would like to take this opportunity to thank and let those people know how appreciative I am for them helping make this journey possible.

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To my friends and coworkers who helped make this possible. They were that listening ear and provided that constant encouragement.

Finally, my advisor, JJ, who gave me guidance and professional insight that guided me in writing this thesis. Her patience was ongoing.

Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my loving husband, two boys, daughter, mother, and grandmother for their endless support and encouragement.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Overview

Every year, a number of children enter kindergarten. Some of these students have had previous experience in a school setting—others have not. Some children have had support at home in preparation for school—others have not. There are many factors that promote a child's readiness for a school setting. Unfortunately, and for various reasons, not all children had the same opportunities to learn the necessary skills in preparation for kindergarten. Educators, caregivers, and the community need to be alert and ready to assist all children with experiences that provide readiness for their beginning education and their future.

What does it mean to be "ready" for school? Kindergarten readiness, also known as school readiness, needs common goal factors set by the perspectives of both caregivers and teachers. The Minnesota Department of Education states a child is ready for kindergarten when he/she:

- Is at least 5 years of age by September 1st of the child's enrollment year
- Has received early childhood screening
- Has received medically acceptable immunizations (Minnesota Department of Education, n.d.)

These guidelines are very general and say nothing about the academics or developmental conditions of the child. Through this study, attention is focused on these particular areas, along with perspectives from caregivers and teachers whom they believe are kindergarten ready. Currently, there is a push toward developing universal preschool for 4-year-olds in Minnesota and nation-wide. This could mitigate a link of beliefs between teachers and caregivers for a

common goal and an accurate definition of what “kindergarten readiness” really is.

Unfortunately, universal preschool is not required in Minnesota. The responsibility to make sure as many children as possible will receive the experience of preschool or a social setting is very important. Preliminary research is required, but it is action that will achieve the goal of working together to have our children ready for kindergarten, now and for their future education in years to come.

Importance of Study

“It takes a village to raise a child” is a popular saying people use when talking about raising a child. This saying has a lot of meaning and it truly does take a village to help raise a child to be ready for the real world. There are so many developmental goals, social-emotional goals, and much more that goes into development starting at such a young age. This study focused on whether caregivers and teachers have similar beliefs when considering if a child is ready for kindergarten. It truly takes both of them, plus others involved with the child, to come to an accord so the whole child’s needs are being met. Just as it is necessary to learn as much as we can about the family life of children in our care, we need to be intentional in providing education to families and what they can expect from their child (Synder, 2017). This study gives us an idea if most caregivers and teachers are looking at the same characteristics of child readiness for kindergarten.

Statement of Problem

In today’s world, family environments, technology, and standards have changed the way we live. Some children have more stressors than ever before due to the environment of the home or the parenting they receive. Technology is all around us, some for good, but in many ways

negative. Some children exceed amount of time on technology which could affect their development. Standards in school are raised by people that do not have full understanding of what is developmentally appropriate. Our children are required to live up to those standards when they may not be ready. With these factors, plus more, teachers and parents may not be on the same level of what should be expected by their children at such a young age. The development that takes place is so important at this age and we need to all work together, so we are providing the best foundation for children and their future.

Purpose and Research Questions

The purpose of this proposed qualitative study is to examine the perspectives of what it means to be kindergarten ready according to what teachers think, compared to caregiver opinions. Since the standards currently are more rigorous compared to years past, it is important that teachers and caregivers are in agreement in identifying needs of the “whole” child. Throughout this study I am using the word caregivers, not parents, as caregivers can include parents, grandparents, or any other guardian of the child.

Questions that will be studied through surveys with caregivers and teachers are:

- What are caregivers’ perceptions of Kindergarten Readiness, compared to teachers?
- What are the expectations of caregivers and teachers of how preschool prepares children for kindergarten?

Conceptual Framework

Children enter kindergarten at different levels of development. Some are ready academically, some are ready social-emotionally, and some are simply not ready. No two children are alike. The same material can be presented in the same manner with the same facts,

but children do not accept with the same reaction mentally, thus children may be stronger in one area over another developmental field. The goal is to include perceptions of the caregivers and teachers to find agreement. Looking at the child's strengths and weaknesses will emphasize areas the child needs further assistance in which to grow. Remember, the most important goal is to prepare the child to be kindergarten ready. This can only happen with the cooperation and collaboration of caregivers and teachers working together.

Conclusion

Chapter 1 contained information regarding what it takes for a child to be considered "Kindergarten Ready," the goal of this study. The Minnesota Department of Education states they are ready if they are age 5 by September 1st of the enrollment year, received early childhood screening, and has received medically acceptable immunizations. Teachers recognize there are far more important conditions than the requirements listed above for a child to be considered ready for kindergarten. The child becomes ready often by the opportunities provided to them. They need support from caregivers, the chance to play, and be creative. This is how they learn best. They also need to socialize and interact with other children and adults. Through these experiences, different social-emotional and academic skills usually develop. Again, this study promotes caregivers and teachers "in agreement" of the child's needs to be considered kindergarten ready. Caregivers and teachers working together with each individual child will best meet the child's needs. The study also examines perceptions by teachers and caregivers if preschool prepares children for kindergarten.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Overview

In this chapter, research of different skills needed to be considered ready for school is reviewed. The two main areas examined are school and social-emotional readiness. Also included is discussion and description of the role of preschool experience, benefits and importance of play, and working with families.

School Readiness

Every year children enter kindergarten regardless of their “readiness.” Children are expected to come to school ready to learn, sit with large groups, and work independently. Many children are “ready” and most likely have learned the above skills by attending a preschool program. Others are not prepared because they have not participated in preschool or are developmentally just not ready. Kindergarten readiness is a complex idea linked to multiple meanings and factors. Chronological age, developmental stage, specific academic and social skills, and home/school connections are associated with readiness (Hatcher, Nuner, & Paulsel, 2012). These factors are much more in depth compared to the Minnesota Department of 5 by September 1 of the enrollment year, has received early childhood screening, and received medically acceptable immunizations.

With considerations of MDE, there also are more and more academic requirements of children in kindergarten. Pretti-Frontczak (2014), past president of Division for Early Childhood, stated “public K-12 systems face enormous pressure to close the achievement gap for students who are struggling, address underachievement in academic performance, and ensure all learners are proficient across identified standards” (p. 52) School systems are dealing with this

pressure by turning the attention on the early years. However, the requirement skills for school readiness cannot be achieved if caregivers and teachers of preschoolers have conflicting or competing beliefs of what it means to “be ready.”

Another study by Hatcher et al. (2012), found some parents’ beliefs differed from teachers on important factors in the Kindergarten Readiness program. Their research was done in three programs in two states. They all served preschool-age children, using developmentally appropriate, play-based approaches as described by NAEYC. In the first program teachers and caregivers emphasized the importance of social and emotional readiness as well as the positive role of preschool in kindergarten readiness. The second group of parents associated literacy skills with readiness, and teachers emphasized the social and emotional factors. The final group concluded with both parents and teachers in agreement literacy skills were the most important goal for readiness. Summarizing the overall opinions of the above groups, literacy and social-emotional skills are the most important factors in “readiness for kindergarten.”

Social-Emotional Readiness

Social-Emotional Readiness is another key factor in being kindergarten adept. Not only is social-emotional readiness important for school, but it plays a big role in later communal success for the child. *Zero to Three* website refers to social-emotional development by asserting “loving relationships provide young children with a sense of comfort, safety and confidence. They teach young children how to form friendships, communicate emotions and deal with challenges.” This area of development covers so much as it compares relationships, and self-regulation to feelings and emotions.

In a 19-year-old study, researchers found it was not reading and writing that predicted future success. Rather, they say your child's social and emotional skills are what determine how likely your child will go to college rather than end up in jail (Morin, n.d.). As soon as a child is born, emotional attachment is felt within the family. Stability must continue for a child to grow developmentally. In the Journal of the National Association for the Education of Young Children, an article reported children who live in poverty are twice as likely to be at risk for developmental, behavioral, and social delays as children in families earning 200% or more of the federal poverty line. That is, while 10-21% of all preschool children show challenging behaviors such as aggression, noncompliance, defiance, tantrums, and property destruction, 30% of children who live in poverty exhibit such behaviors (Price & Steed, 2016). This statistic justifies how important it is for educators to know their students, provide special attention, and focus on students with needs! It is never too late for a child to learn and experience these essentials. The sooner this happens, the better for a child.

Role of Preschool in Readiness

Yes, preschool plays an important part in helping children gain skills in preparation for kindergarten. Through preschool, children gain skills of socialization, academics, and self-regulation to name a few of many achievements desired for kindergarten readiness. Children learn to problem-solve through play and guidance from teachers. Kindergarten teachers often say they recognize children who previously attended a preschool program in comparison to those not given the opportunity. This indicates the difference in children's readiness skills because of early preschool programs. It is not always academic skills, but also their ability to participate in large group activities or knowing to raise their hand when needing assistance. The process is

more difficult for children who did not attend preschool programs such as kindergarten nursery school (Pekdogan & Akgul, 2016).

Children who did not attend preschool will learn these skills eventually. Those with early schooling have a head start and will be learning other new things sooner. The study by Hatcher et al. (2012) found parents agreed preschool made an impact on their child being ready for school. It also stated that participants noted the importance of school routines. Descriptions of behaviors such as waiting in line, following directions, and participation in large group activities, indicate that teachers and parents viewed kindergartens as structured social and academic environments. In preschool, teachers must recognize the need to continue providing opportunities for children to learn through “play” and in all developmental areas in preparation for the child’s future.

Play in Preschool

Playful action and activity are a very important components of preschool learning. They not only learn by frolicking and romping with each other, but also through adult interaction in guiding them. Play is a developmentally appropriate practice for the early years. If you observe a preschool classroom, you see different stations around the room where play and pretending takes place. Children are learning different skills while doing so. Constructive play, building, and drawing fosters skills in planning, using language, and developing fine motor skill control. Pretend play (role play) promotes communication, planning, comparing, problem-solving, and self-regulation (Becker & Mastrangelo, 2017). If a child is acting in dramatic play, not only do they get to dress up and have conversations with each other, but the “waiter” could be writing

down the order, which is practicing fine motor/writing skills plus much more! Many academic segments occur in every area of a preschool classroom.

The conversations which occur in preschool classrooms are full of learning opportunities for children, and sometimes for the adults. Social interaction opportunities for young children often happen in the context of play. One can really see this play roll out in center-based and free-play experiences in preschools. This is essential to meet the social readiness goals most parents and teachers express is needed for preschoolers (Hatcher et al., 2012).

Play is something that does not just occur at preschool. Play can be, and should be, in the home as well. Children need interactions with others to pretend and learn from the real world around them. Some of the children today may not get the opportunity to play, or even know how to play, depending on their home environment and the role models around them. Technology is also starting to take a toll on play around us, as children get intertwined with their phones, iPads, and other new devices. Educators need to persuade caregivers to be aware of how technology is affecting our children. It is imperative to give children the attention they deserve, person to person.

Working Together with Families (Communication)

Children, families, and schools should always work together to facilitate the child's adaptation to school (Pekdogan & Akgul, 2016). It is not just preschool or the home environment that help children become ready. It is the school and families working together to make the child prepared and successful. When it comes to children being ready for kindergarten, caregivers need to know the expectations. In one of the studies, parents expected their children's teachers to provide them with information upon which to base readiness for kindergarten

(Hatcher et al., 2012). Some caregivers truly rely on what the teacher recommends, to determine if their child is ready to go to kindergarten. They not only want information on the child's readiness, but there are those who believe it is the teacher's responsibility to teach their child the necessary skills regardless of the level of readiness the child is currently at. They believe the teacher is being paid to educate their child. They look at the teachers as experts. Teachers need to educate caregivers of what is expected in kindergarten, and what they can do to assist their child to prepare at home as well.

Caregivers need to realize their own impact on their children. It is the "everyday" life around them that discreetly helps them become kindergarten ready. Nothing gives a child more security, love, and a future desire for learning than sitting warmly cuddled in a caregiver's lap listening to them read a story to them. A child never forgets sitting on the floor playing games with their caregivers or loved ones. At the same time, they are learning.

A school in Ontario, Canada, said it best when they said their goal is to "build relationships with families to increase consistency between home and school environments, making the classroom an extension of home for each child" (Becker & Mastrangelo, 2017, p. 21). Getting children ready for school really takes an army of people at home, daycare, school, and all others involved in that child's life.

Conclusion

Chapter 2 reviewed research relating to school readiness and social-emotional readiness when considering what it takes to be kindergarten ready. It also looked at the role of preschool in readiness, play in preschool, and working together with families. Sufficient research shows that all these play a key role in being ready for school.

The next chapter is a review of the purpose of this study. It is a comparison between the perceptions of caregivers and teachers of what it means to be considered kindergarten ready, and also the role of preschool in readiness. The research design, setting, participants, data collection procedure, and data analysis are also discussed.

Chapter 3: Method

Opening

To foster children's overall growth and learning, caregivers along with teachers need to work together toward the same goal. Caregivers and teachers both want the best for their children. This development starts at birth and continues well into the later years. Research shows preschool plays an important role in helping children become ready for kindergarten. However, if a caregiver does not send their child to preschool, it is important to get the word out in the community to families of what is considered important for their child. The purpose of this study was to view the perceptions of caregivers about Kindergarten readiness as compared to teachers. It is also examined perceptions of caregivers and teachers of how preschool prepares children for kindergarten.

Research Design and Procedures

Through this mixed method study, both caregivers and preschool/kindergarten teachers were surveyed. The caregivers had a different set of questions compared to the teachers but with the same goals. Questionnaires were composed with open-ended questions. The written responses gathered from the teacher and caregiver survey are the qualitative data. The quantitative data is presented in the tables where percentages were formulated by taking the number of related responses divided by the total number of either teacher or caregiver participants. For the more in-depth explanation see data analysis at the end of this chapter. Google forms were used for the survey and were retained for data evaluation. Data analysis took place when questionnaires were completed. Common themes were determined from the data analysis. Questions studied through surveys with caregivers and teachers were:

- What are caregivers' perceptions of Kindergarten Readiness, as compared to teachers?
- What are the expectations of caregivers and teachers of how preschool prepares children for kindergarten?

Setting

The study was conducted with caregivers within one rural Minnesota school district. There are around 200 children in a preschool program or Early Childhood Family Education classes.

This study also included working with preschool and kindergarten teachers within multiple districts within rural Minnesota to collect data.

Participants

The participants for this study consisted of teachers, both preschool and kindergarten, and caregivers of children ages birth to 6. The caregivers were volunteers from preschool and ECFE classrooms within a rural community in Minnesota. The teachers, both preschool and kindergarten, were also volunteers from multiple schools in Minnesota. Below you will find the demographic results of participants.

Table 1*Teacher Participants*What grade level do you teach?

	Preschool (Age 3)	Preschool (Age 4-5)	Preschool (Age 3-5_	Kindergarten	Both Preschool and Kindergarten
Teachers (41 resp)	n=5 12%	n=11 27%	n=10 24%	n=13 32%	n=2 5%

How long have you been teaching?

	1-3 years	4-6 years	7-10 years	11-15 years	15-20 years	20-25 years	26+ years
Teachers (41 resp)	n=7 17.1%	n=4 9.8%	n=8 19.5%	n=6 14.6%	n=6 14.6%	n=6 14.6%	n=4 9.8%

What is your highest level of education?

	High School or GED	Some College	Associates Degree	Bachelor's Degree	Master's Degree
Teachers (41 resp)	n=1 2.4%	n=0	n=0	n=31 75.6%	n=9 22%

Table 2*Caregiver Participants*How many children do you have?

	1	2	3	4+
Caregiver's (63 resp)	n=12 19%	n=32 50.8%	n=15 23.8%	n=4 6.4%

Ages of children (a total of 126 children birth to 7+)

	0-12 Months	1 Year	2 Years	3 Years	4 Years	5 Years	6 Years	7+ Years
Caregivers (63 resp)	n=14 11%	n=4 3%	n=13 10%	n=21 17%	n=24 19%	n=18 14%	n=10 8%	n=22 18%

How your child attended any of these opportunities (checked all that applied)

	Preschool	Early Childhood Family Education Classes	Sunday School	Family Childcare	Center Childcare
Caregivers (186 total resp to question)	n=55 30%	n=42 23%	n=28 15%	n=37 20%	n=24 12%

What is your highest level of education?

	Less than High School	High School or GED	Some College	Bachelor's Degree	Master's Degree
Caregivers (63 resp)	n=1 1.6%	n=9 14.3%	n=17 27%	n=24 28.1%	n=12 19%

Data Collection Procedure

Data were collected using the online survey through Google Forms. Prior to distributing, the researcher developed a survey. It was pilot tested with individuals who had similar experiences, training and education, as the study's participants. An email with a link to the survey and directions for the survey was sent to all at the same time. Staff and caregivers had 2

weeks to complete the survey, with a reminder email sent after one week to increase the return rate of surveys.

Data Analysis

The open-ended items were reviewed and analyzed looking for patterns in the data to be put into themes to better explain the findings. Common language among the responses from caregivers and teachers was used to put the data into categories. Keywords for each category are listed below of how I grouped participants responses into categories.

These keywords are for Table 1 under Results looking at the top academic skill or goal.

Table 3

Language Used for Categories

	Letters/Literacy	Numbers/Colors	Both Letters & Numbers	Name	Social-Emotional Skills	Both Academic & Social Skills
Keywords	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognize • Identify • Label • Form letters • Letter sounds • Read • Alphabet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognize • Identify • Form numbers shapes, and/or colors • Counting 	Both mentioned in response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writes • Recognize • Identify name 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning to share • Controlling emotions • Self-regulate • Socialization • Feelings • Waiting for their turn 	Both mentioned in response

Keywords used for the Social-Emotional table are in found in the headings on the table. The same key words were used to into categories for the other questions with the same categories.

To get the number of percentages used in my tables, I took the number of related responses divided by the total number of either teacher or caregiver participants. For example, looking at the question regarding what is more important- social-emotional or academics? Thirty-seven out of 41 teachers responded social-emotional was more important. I took 37

divided 41 (total number of teachers surveyed) to get 90%. For caregivers, 38 said social emotional was more important. Thirty-eight divided by 63 (total number of caregivers surveyed) to get 60%. The demographic items were electronically tabulated and analyzed using descriptive statistics.

Chapter 4: Results

Overview

The purpose of the survey was to obtain caregivers' and teachers' perspectives on what it means to be kindergarten ready, as well as the role of preschool in kindergarten. To address the research question, electronic surveys were distributed to over 50 preschool or kindergarten teachers with 41 participating. The caregiver survey was distributed to caregivers with children ages 0-6 in one school district and had 63 complete the survey. The results of the research obtained through the survey are explained below in different sections of this chapter.

Numeric Results

All questions besides demographic questions were narrative responses. Please see below.

Narrative Responses

Each survey question was open ended and provided caregivers and teachers a space to write what they wanted to share. Please see the table below for each question comparing the caregiver responses to the teacher responses. Common themes were categorized to report data. For a complete record of the raw narrative data, please refer to Appendix A. In Chapter 5, some of the narrative responses will be used to further clarify the interpretation of participant perceptions.

Table 4*Survey Results*Top academic skill or goal for a child entering Kindergarten

	Letters/ Literacy	Numbers/ Colors	Both Letters & Numbers	Name	Social- Emotional Skills	Both Academic & Social- Emotional	Tie Shoes	Growth & Interest in Learning
Teachers (41 resp)	(n=15) 37%	(n=4) 10%	(n=8) 20%	(n=5) 12%	(n=6) 14%			(n=3) 7%
Caregivers	(n=13) 21%	(n=1) 1%	(n=32) 51%	(n=2) 3%	(n=6) 10%	(n=7) 11%	(n=2) 3%	

Top social-emotional skill or goal for a child entering Kindergarten:

	Name Feelings/ Emotions	Self- Regulation	Follow Directions and Attend	Relationships	Communication	Multiple Indicators	Misc (Routines, transitions, problem- solving, independence, etc.
Teachers (41 resp)	(n=5) 12%	(n=6) 15%	(n=4) 10%	(n=12) 29%	(n=1) 2%	(n=6) 15%	(n=7) 17%
Care- givers (63 resp)	(n=10) 16%	(n=17) 27%	(n=3) 4%	(n=15) 24%	(n=6) 10%	(n=4) 6%	(n=8) 13%

What is more important, social-emotional or academic?

	Social-Emotional	Academics	Both	Other
Teachers (41 resp)	(n=37) 90%		(n=4) 10%	
Caregivers (63 resp)	(n=38) 60%	(n=6) 0%	(n=14) 22%	(n=5) 8%

Table 4 (continued)What skill should a child have upon completion of Kindergarten

	Letters/Literacy	Numbers/Colors	Both Letters & Numbers	Social-Emotional Skills	Both Academic & Social-Emotional	Other (gross/fine motor, tie shoes, problem-solving, learn, retain/recall, etc.)
Teachers (41 resp)	(n=18) 44%		(n=2) 5%	(n=19) 46%	(n=1) 2.5%	(n=1) 2.5%
Caregivers (63 resp)	(n=18) 29%	(n=2) 3%	(n=6) 9%	(n=12) 19%	(n=13) 21%	(n=12) 19%

Role of preschool in Kindergarten

	Academic Skills	Social-Emotional Skills	Both Academic & Social-Emotional	Other (positive transition, practice, beneficial, etc.)
Teachers 41 (resp)	(n=1) 2%	(n=23) 56%	(n=17) 41%	
Caregivers (63 resp)	(n=3) 5%	(n=11) 17.5%	(n=38) 60%	(n=11) 17.5%

CAREGIVER ONLY QUESTIONSRole of caregiver to get ready for Kindergarten

	Academic Skills	Social-Emotional Skills	Both Academic & Social-Emotional	Other (positive transition, practice, beneficial, etc.)
Caregivers (63 resp)	(n=6) 10%	(n=7) 11%	(n=36) 57%	(n=14) 22%

Is your child ready for kindergarten?

	No	Yes	Not of Age
Caregivers (63 resp)	(n=9) 14%	(n=31) 49%	(n=23) 37%

Note: Empty boxes in tables below means it was not identified/rated.

Conclusion

Results of the survey offer a wide variety of caregiver and teacher perceptions on what it means to be kindergarten ready. Overall, the perceptions on the role for preschool seemed to be agreed on that it does have its purpose leading up to kindergarten. Results of this study is discussed in greater depth in the next chapter.

Chapter 5: Discussion

The primary purpose of this study was to compare the perspectives of caregivers and teachers on what kindergarten readiness is, as well as what the role of preschool is in preparing children for kindergarten. The findings of this study indicated that both caregivers and teachers are in agreement that social-emotional skills are more important than academic skills. The findings also showed that there are some different perspectives between caregivers and teachers when looking at other skills for being considered ready for kindergarten. When comparing the perspectives on the role of preschool in kindergarten, it was found to have very similar responses in that social-emotional skills and academics come from it.

Narrative Findings

Overall, the findings from the qualitative data were positive and gave great insight into the perspectives from caregivers and teachers. When looking at what kindergarten readiness is, the survey focused on academic and social-emotional skills and dove deeper within those areas. The first area focused on was what the top academic skill or goal is for a child entering kindergarten. Thirty-seven percent of the teachers responded with letters/literacy being highest. Whereas, 51% of the caregivers said it is both letters/literacy and numbers. The second highest area for this group was letters/literacy for caregivers, and both letters/literacy and numbers for teachers. The top two were the same, regardless. It is good to know that caregivers and teachers agree.

The second area the survey examined is what social-emotional skill or goal is important for a child entering kindergarten. The highest rated two skills, relationship and self-regulation, were again in agreement by caregivers and teachers. The *Zero to Three* website says “healthy

social-emotional development involves the ability to form satisfying, trusting relationships with others, play, communicate, learn, face challenges, and experience and handle a full range of emotions. It is through relationships that young children develop these skills and attributes. Starting from birth, babies are learning who they are by how they are treated. Loving relationships provide young children a sense of comfort, safety, and confidence. They teach young children how to form friendships, communicate emotions, and to deal with challenges. Strong, positive relationships also help children develop trust, empathy, compassion, and a sense of right and wrong.” With this information caregivers and teachers are in accord as those relationships need to happen first, and the rest will follow.

The survey revealed what teachers and caregivers thought were more important, academic or social-emotional skills for their child entering kindergarten. Both percentages were high with teachers at 90%, and caregivers at 60%, thinking social-emotional skills were more important. A teacher participant said “Once they have social-emotional needs, they then can learn. Without those skills it is hard to learn.” Caregivers had similar responses to the teachers on the importance of social-emotional development. One caregiver participant said, “If they are able to sit, listen, follow directions, and self-soothe, the academic piece will fall into place. If they are not able to do those social-emotional pieces, learning is way more difficult.” It is significant that caregivers and teachers are in agreement that working together to help children have these social-emotional skills is crucial and that they both realize the importance of them.

One area the data provided with different results among caregivers and teachers is what skill a child has upon completion of kindergarten. Forty-six percent of teachers chose social-emotional skills, compared to caregivers at 19%. Whereas, 29% of caregivers thought

letters/literacy was more important upon completion of kindergarten, compared to teachers at 44% for this skill. Again, it was the top two, but the percentage was more of an increase for caregivers. If the social-emotional needs are met first, the academics will come and letters/literacy would follow closely behind.

When moving on to the second major question for this study of the role of preschool in kindergarten, results were somewhat similar among caregivers and teachers. In conversations with caregivers, expectations could say academic skills are what are learned in preschool. Only 3, or 5%, were in agreement. 23 teachers, or 56%, responded that social-emotional skills are the focus of preschool. Sixty percent of caregivers did respond with social-emotional skills, but they also said academic skills to go along with it. When looking at preschool classrooms, social-emotional skills are used more without it being brought to attention. Those skills are constantly worked on, but not recognized by children. Children are more aware of the academic pieces being taught to them. That is what is talked about with parents. Coming back to data from earlier, the social-emotional needs need to be taught and developed first, then the academic piece will come.

At the end of the caregiver survey, participants were asked if they think their child is ready for kindergarten. Thirty-seven percent of caregivers responding did not have children age-eligible for kindergarten. Of the remaining 63%, 49% thought their kids were ready and many commented they were, because of preschool. One caregiver participant said, "Preschool structure gets them ready for kindergarten." Other participants commented that their child is ready because of academic skills and can write his/her name, along with other social-emotional needs or skills. The caregivers who responded their child was not ready for kindergarten mainly

emphasized that their child needed more developed social-emotional skills, such as knowing how to self-regulate.

In our contemporary world, kindergarten is an adjustment with many changes over the years. The standards are not the same and much more is expected academically now when kids are not developmentally ready, which is part of the reason for the achievement gap later on. One caregiver commented in the survey by stating, “they would like kindergarten to go back to its original purpose, learn how to play and friendship skills.” In agreement, standards are being pushed down more and more. People are forgetting this is the time that kids learn so much through play! Through this data, it is reassuring to know that caregivers and teachers are for the most part on the same page, and not forgetting how important those social-emotional skills are. It is a positive thing and hopefully the collaboration continues.

Study Limitations

Three limitations have been identified for this research study. First, the number of teacher participants was small compared to the caregiver participants. There were 41 teachers and 63 caregiver participants for a total of 104. When comparing the data between the two and looking at percentages, there is more of a difference.

The second limitation to this study is that all the caregiver participants are from one school district. With that being the case, results cannot be generalized to any other district. This information may be considered useful for other early childhood/kindergarten programs in a similar size school district. The teacher participants were from multiple school districts, but they were all from rural Minnesota.

The final limitation is the use of a cross-sectional study design. The survey data was collected during one single point in time making it impossible to measure how the participants' perceptions may change over time. Since data collection was based on self-reported individual perceptions, interpretation is to be taken with caution.

New Steps in Research

It is important for research to continue when looking at the perceptions of caregivers and teachers of what it means to be kindergarten ready. Although most of the research came out positive and both sets of participants had similar thoughts, there are still a number of people out there who do not know what it means to be kindergarten ready. Standards may change with time, but social-emotional needs will always need to be met first. I think educated people are a lot more aware of these needs. However, a portion still does not understand them and as educators, it is part of our job to do our best to reach them.

As educators we need to provide opportunity to collaborate more with parents on what the social-emotional needs/skills are for getting ready for school. Kindergarten Connection, parent meeting nights, and even ECFE classes are great nights to be in touch with caregivers of future kindergartners. Another key part to this is utilizing community resources like Greater Minnesota SEED program or other similar services to help reach and inform parents. These classes may need to be offered in different settings and times to make sure we are meeting the needs of the families the best as we can.

Another area that research needs to continue in is the importance of preschool and the role it plays in kindergarten. The skills learned through play and preschool structure cannot be replicated at home.

Conclusions

As an educator, I was very happy with the positive results from the survey. I am a strong believer that if caregivers and teachers are on the same page of what it means to be kindergarten ready; we are working together for the “whole” child. At this age, it is so important these kids are learning from all of us, and it is not beneficial to be giving them conflicting messages. It is reassuring to me that the participants know the importance of social-emotional development first, then focusing on academics later. I also find good in that the caregivers are informed about what skills their child is working on and why it is important to have these skills when going on to kindergarten. I believe the caregivers who know these skills are the ones who understand the importance of sending their child to preschool, and the role that plays in preparing their child for kindergarten readiness.

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Appendix A: Raw Survey Narrative Data

Caregiver Responses

What academic skill or goal would you want your child to have before entering kindergarten? Why?
Being patient with peers and sharing
Although I know it is important for a child to be academically ready for kindergarten, as both a teacher and a parent, I don't put a lot of importance on academics with my child. I find it's more important for him to be physically, mentally, and emotionally ready for school.
A good handle on the alphabet, counting to 20, colors and shapes
Recognition of numbers and letters, following basic directions to complete a task as a foundation to build on in kindergarten.
Alphabet, counting to 20, colors and shapes, they should have a good handle not know them all
I would like my children to know the alphabet, basic numbers and common sight words. I feel those items are important because they lay the groundwork to build on in kindergarten.
I honestly don't know. Anything I'm coming up with at this point has more to do with social-emotional goals than academic.
Letter sounds
Spelling their name because I hear it's required now...?
Recognize colors, shapes, be able to make sounds for letters
Knows her alphabet, can count, knows to put in coat.
Ability to learn a new concept and be able to carryover to unstructured tasks.
Being able to write their name, identify most of the letters of the alphabet
Being able to recognize and write her 1st and last name, recognizing letters/sounds, colors, shapes, social norms of how schools "work", understand numbers, 1:1 correspondence, basic problem solving, basic conflict resolution, basic self-help/advocacy skills
Tie shoes
Vocabulary to assist with communication is very important. Letters, numbers, and colors to help prepare for simple math and reading. Social skills are also very important.
Reading. Reading is something you do every day. You need to be able to read
I would like my child to be able to tie her own shoes before she enters kindergarten. I feel it's a valuable fine motor skill that benefits her and the class as a whole. If more children could tie their own shoes/zip up coats, it would speed up the getting ready to go home/go out for recess time.
ABC's, counting to 25. Shape recognition. Colors
Letter and number recognition, pre academic skills to reading and math

To be able to recite alphabet, recognize letters, reading basic words. Recognize numbers, count up to 100, be able to speak in full sentences and write name.
I want my daughter to be socially ready as well as where she needs to be academically as recommended by the teacher
Writing
Letter recognition
Reading
Positive attitude towards school
The goal I have for my children is that they could count to 20, recognize all letters and numbers and be able to write their name.
Knowing letters, shapes, patterns, sounds, writing. They need to know these basic concepts in Kindergarten.
Alphabet recognition/sounds, count/identify numbers to 20, identify basic colors and shapes.
Know their ABC
Knowledge of letters, letter sounds, numbers, shapes, etc. Because then I think that serves as a solid base for the test of her learning.
Letter recognition and letter sounds
Be able to recognize all numbers 0-10 and letters.
Some numbers and some of the alphabet
Recognize all letters and numbers.
To know how to count to 10, can say the alphabet, know their names, know their parents' names, know around 10 colors, know the basic shapes. Know how to follow simple directions, be able to say at least a 5 worded sentence, know some basic opposites (up and down, big and small, light and dark).
I feel it is important for parents and daycare providers to work with children on the basics, so teachers have blocks to build on.
I would like my child to be able to write his name, have the ability to count to at least 30, and know a fair portion of the alphabet. I feel all of these skills are very important when starting kindergarten, as kindergarten is typically when children expand on these basics.
Reading - We have an immense love for books and reading at home, and I find myself always reading. Whether it's an online article, magazine, or book and I want my child to have that same love for learning and knowledge.
I love that my daughter learned how to spell her name and knows most letters and numbers. I think that will give her a head start in learning to read/recognizing words
Colors

To know letters, numbers, colors, shapes, etc. I believe this is a good foundation to keep building upon as more activities or learning can happen if they have these skills.
reading some, number recognition, to be able to feel good that he\she has some idea of academics and doesn't get behind other students.
Letter recognition, early math skills, and problem-solving skills
Knowing letters. This is such a good foundation for learning to read and write in kindergarten!
Socialization and learning to share
Letter identification and sounds in preparation for reading
Recognize numbers and letters
Printing their name, knowing letter names
Kindergarten skills. Because I'd like her to be ahead or at least not behind.
ABC, counting, writing name
Letter and number recognition because it lays the foundation for reading.
To feel confident in learning.
To feel confident in learning.
To speak and write the alphabet, use a writing utensil correctly, understand what, why, when, where, how questions
Knowing the alphabet; counting to 20; knowing colors; social skills
Letter and number recognition as the base to their reading and math skills
I would want my child to be excited to learn and focused on learning the norms of school prior to entering kindergarten, walking in the halls, sitting while listening to stories and sharing. I believe having this as a base first would help them be able to learn more of the academics in school.
Able to write their name, alphabet & numbers so they can learn quickly to read fluently
Numbers, alphabet,
Colors numbers letters starting to read
Ability to verbalize ABC's, numbers 1-10, experience writing name
Overall readiness for kindergarten.

What social-emotional goal do you have for your child entering kindergarten? (Examples: relationships, self-regulation, emotions, etc.)
Relationships, emotions, self-regulation
I believe it's important to be able to have an awareness of peer relationships, to be able to maintain attention, and a sense of respect for authority figures.

Being able to understand sharing, her feelings, and her peers' feelings
Communicating with their peers and teachers, without being too shy to do so.
That they can share and understand themselves and their peers
Having older siblings helps the social-emotional goal. My goal would be for my child to continue to grow as a person.
I'd like for him to be able to focus on a task long enough to be able to successfully complete it.
Emotions
He's pretty well rounded for a 5-year-old.
Play well with others
Able to speak up for herself to avoid bullying.
Being able to calm herself down when upset, and if unable to know when to ask for help.
Relationships, being able to learn to wait their turn, learning to focus on what they're supposed to be doing.
I would hope that she understands where and whom to ask for help if she needs assistance/clarification.
I think she will do awesome making new friends in kindergarten
The ability to self-regulate is so important. Ability to have give-and-take related to relationships.
Understanding how to explain emotions
My daughter is highly sensitive. Due to being an only child/niece/grandchild/great-grandchild. So, she, by default, is very spoiled. She's used to being the only kid in a room so it's difficult for her to start and grow a friendship with others her age. She does very well with adults and teens. My main goal is for her to be more empathic to other children and not be so hard on other kids because they aren't like her. & for her to be able to accept criticism better. She always wants to be the best at everything she does. When something challenging arises she's hard on herself for not getting it right away.
Be able to express feelings. Be able to start a conversation with new people
Self-regulation (be able to calm down when asked)
Self-Regulation, Emotional Control, Transitions.
I feel that my daughter exhibits the above characteristics appropriately for her age
Relationship
Confidence
Getting along well with others, sharing
To be eager to learn
Being able to share and play with friends.
Being able to make friendships, sit still and listen, and be able to focus on work that isn't always fun

Able to verbally communicate wants and needs, manners (please, thank you, excuse me) and sharing/taking turns
Self-regulation
To be able to problem solve instead of throwing a fit/whining. I realize that is how toddlers get through their frustrations, but to learn skills to stop and think of ways to solve the problem or issue, including asking others for help.
I want my child to have self confidence
Teamwork
Sharing and being well mannered
Control himself
I would like my children to be aware of their emotions, what makes them happy, sad, angry, etc. And also, be able to develop friendships with others, to be able to show empathy for others and try to play with everyone.
I would like him to verbally express how he is feeling. For example, instead of throwing a temper tantrum, I would like him to be able to verbally express if/why he is upset.
Self-regulation
She's a little bit more shy than I'd expect, since her mother is more outgoing. she's very aware of her emotions and very nurturing, because of that I feel that she focuses on other friends' emotions rather than herself & her academics
Emotions
Making friends, speaking up, asking questions and being kind, compassionate and caring.
Make friends, enjoy learning, be able to be away from family and not get upset
The ability to have successful relationships and emotional regulation
Relationships, having some children who they consider friends.
How to express his emotions in a positive way
Self-confidence
Being able to recognize when others are not being included, and make an effort to include them
Being self-confident in themselves, being comfortable asking for help when needed
I think she is doing well in cardinal's kids club
Friendships
Self-regulation, ability to adapt to a changing environment
Communication
Communication
Not to give up when frustrated

Listening to instructions; follow directions; play with others
Peer relationship, self-regulation, understanding of emotions
I would hope my child is able to share and behave appropriately with others, including identifying and regulating emotions.
Socialize & interact with students & teacher
Listening to others
Identify emotions, interact well with others and independently
Reduced anxiety, socialization skills with other children and teachers, confidence in expressing self wants and needs in an appropriate manner
Needs to work on sharing as well as independent play

What area do you find more important for a child entering kindergarten, to have academic development or social-emotional development? Please explain.
Social emotional skills. Education will always be learned.
Social Emotional Development for sure. If that piece isn't there, learning simply isn't going to occur. I taught Kindergarten - 4th grade SPED for several years and I would say that the majority of the students who were within my program were students who were not emotionally ready to begin school and therefore, were too immature for the demands placed upon them in class. (I frequently had students of lower incomes families who had turned 5 in July or August and they could no longer afford another year of daycare)
Social-Emotional, they need to have an understanding of themselves and others before they can learn
The social-emotional development is what I find pre-school most important for. They will continue to work on both their academic and social-emotional skills, but I feel it's important to introduce them to a classroom setting early on to know what to expect about being with their peers and teachers and building relationships.
Social-emotional
The academic development is more important to me. My child goes to daycare for the social-emotional development along with learning that at home. The academic portion is taught at school by wonderful teachers who are specifically trained for that. As parents, we take the feedback from teachers and continue at home. Education is so important in all areas of life.
Social-emotional because, like other things in life, you can learn new skills but developing the abilities to cope, make friends, interact socially, etc. are much more difficult to learn the older a person gets.
Social emotional- academic is tied to tests and scores which don't take in to account the individual child.
Social-emotional so it may be easier to learn as opposed to a child without relationships within school.

Social-emotional development - I believe my baby can meet the academics with work and the help he will get at home. Right now, he is an only child and the way he learns to play with others comes from time with other children - cousins and daycare. I want him to be a well-adjusted, happy boy who treats others well.
Overcome shyness and speak up when necessary.
Social-emotional. If they cannot regular their behaviors-personality they may have a hard time learning new information.
Social-emotional development is more important at this age to me. They have their whole lives to learn all the academic things but need to learn social skills from an early age.
Academic development and social emotional they are both good things she needs.
Social-emotional because Kindergarten is their first real large social structure and in being prepared for this, they are able to then better learn the academic needs.
Both. Because teachers and peers can help and teach you different things
Social emotional, definitely. Academic will come with practice. I feel if a child doesn't have strong social emotional development it sets the tone for how they view school. If a child who's been home with mother all 5/6 years, then suddenly is dropped into a 7-hour school setting it can be very alarming if not traumatic. That child will not like school very much and might suffer a mild form of social anxiety mixed with separation anxiety. Not a good mix for a young child to experience. But a child who's been through ECFE, discovery time and or school readiness they are more fine-tuned as to what to expect for the upcoming kindergarten year. They've had a chance to grow friendships with other children and staff before they get into the start of their academic careers. They are more excited to see their friends again, old teachers, even the lunch ladies. & aren't as nervous about it, since it's a place they've already come to know and enjoy. My daughter loves the lunch lady and always talks about how she compliments her rain boots or sparkly sandals. She talks about seeing a previous teacher and how she enjoyed her class. I'm happy I made the choice to attend ECFE with her, send her to discovery time and 2 years of school readiness. I feel my daughter has developed great in the social emotional aspect.
Only because my child is socially-emotionally developmentally appropriate, I would place more emphasis on academics for her. Our other child would be a different story.
Social emotional- I feel teaching social skills is harder than teaching abcs counting etc.
Social emotional- I feel it is difficult to learn new academic skills when children are not emotionally ready.
Social Emotional Development. They will learn academics for 20 years, and a good base of that is to be able to interact with others.
Both. Need a balance to be successful
Both are important
Social - my child needs to be emotionally prepared for kindergarten otherwise nothing academically will be 100%
They are equally important
Social emotional development

Social/emotional development seems more important before entering kindergarten, so they have the skills to interact with teachers and students when they get to kindergarten.
Social-emotional. Academics cannot be taught if they aren't developmentally ready to learn.
Social-emotional. If the child is unable to cope with being away from parents, participate in group activities, or understand the importance of following directions, furthering the academic skills (especially in a group setting) will be more challenging for the child, their peers, and the teachers.
Social emotion, academics they can learn later
Academic. I think that many of those social skills come with interacting with other kids and adults in a variety of situations. 7th at can't always be taught at home, but the academic can.
Social-emotional development needs to be established first for them to progress academically.
Social-emotional development is more important to me as if the child has a positive mindset or approach to learning and working together with its peers then the academic development can be built up and stimulated
Both
Both. A healthy balance is important.
Social-emotional, because they will know how to get along with others and know how to be around other kids and adults when their parents aren't around to be there as a form of security. I think kids who have social and emotional development seem to be more independent. And I think they can learn more academically in play with other kids because kids teach each other things one may not already know.
I find social-emotional development to be more important before entering kindergarten. In life we are constantly surrounded by people and how they may or may not affect us. We have to learn how to express ourselves and develop the ability to communicate properly with others in all aspects of our life.
Both are equally important. Parents should play a role in academic development in addition to teachers with learning at home prior to kindergarten.
Social- emotional. My daughter was very nervous (and able to express that) about starting kindergarten until we attended kindergarten connection. I think once my daughter (specifically)gets over that mental hump she is able to focus on learning
Academic
Some of both. Academic development is important for children to not start so behind of their peers and become easily frustrated. Social-emotional can be built upon although having some of those skills is good.
both are equally important, need to feel comfortable away from home, and enjoy learning. Have friends
Social emotional because without those skills intact, academic learning is much more difficult.
I think both are important to function well in kindergarten.
Social emotional development, because that is what helps make new friends, being able to be open and express his feelings to grown-ups in a positive manner.
Social-emotional: If the child is developed social-emotionally, he/she is more likely to be able to learn kindergarten skills

Social-emotional. If they have a grasp on regulating their emotions, relationships, etc. then the academic learning should come with less setbacks and the child should be more open to learning.
social-emotional, a quiet, timid child is easily lost in the school system.
Just that she knows what to do and know why it's important to do those things
Social - academics will come with time
Child dependent. Some children are fine academically but need the social-emotional help and vice versa. I do not think it is beneficial to always have an all-inclusive environment. Children with behavioral issues can add disruptions and it takes focus off of the positive and towards the negative behaviors. Also, kids that are excelling academically should be in an environment that challenges them whether that be in an all-inclusive room or not.
Both, social-emotional and academic development. He becomes shy when around different people than family. Makes it more difficult to learn and focus.
Both, social-emotional and academic development. He becomes shy when around different people than family. Makes it more difficult to learn and focus.
Academic--received social skills through daycare
Social emotional. Without social emotional skills, a child may not have the capacity to carry out academic skills
I feel the social emotional development is more important when entering into kindergarten. I feel that in order to learn academically a child must first have a foundation of social/emotional skills.
I believe if they have social & emotional skills it will complement learning academic skills quicker
Both
Academic
Social-emotional development--I feel that this is more important as a child should have the ability/skills to express how they are feeling, what they need, and if they are having any difficulties with a concept. I feel that children are being pushed to learn academic development much earlier than in the past. I feel that kindergarten should be where children learn the alphabet, how to count, writing name and numbers; if they learn this skill in preschool, I feel that this should be viewed as an accelerated skill. Kids are expected to grow up faster and be academically prepared which does have some benefits but I feel that it is important for kids to have more time to experience imaginative play, play outside and with friends, and have more time with social-emotional skills.

What skill would you want your child to have upon completion of kindergarten? Why?
Personal relationships, reading
I would like to see kindergarten go back to its originally purpose -- to learn play and friendship skills.
Sharing, and relationships. A better handle on alphabet, numbers, colors and shapes
To build on communication and relationships with others.

Everything named above, but more of handle on them
I would like my child to be able to read at a kindergarten level. I think it's important since words are the foundation to so many things.
As a parent, I have very little knowledge of what the benchmarks are academically and why. I cannot answer this question.
Reading.
I'm not sure what all will be learned in Kindergarten.
Academic-wise, reading as I know that is a skill they need to have leaving the grade.
Overcome shyness to excel academic.
I would like for my child to have improved positive responses to corrections /instruction provide by others.
Being able to focus on the task at hand, since he struggles with that the most
I'd like her to know how to read and solve basic math problems. I want this because that is where she's at in her academic progression and I'd hope that her kindergarten teacher recognizes her eagerness to learn and monopolizes on the opportunity.
Tying her shoes
Ability to sound out letters and words to start reading, knowledge of basic math, social structure of school, anything else to prepare for 1st grade.
Reading is most important
I would like to see my daughter be able to retain/recall information better. She seems to get distracted somedays and will forget things. Such as what they had for snack, or what the story was for the day. She can't recall it shortly after school, like 3:30/4. Maybe she is just. But she can recall it later in the evening, around supper time or after.
I'd like her to know how to read and solve basic math problems. I want this because that is where she's at in her academic progression and I'd hope that her kindergarten teacher recognizes her eagerness to learn and monopolizes on the opportunity.
All of the above
Upon completion of kindergarten I would like my child to have grown in the area of social/emotional skills.
Be able to transition well, write their letters and numbers, read more words than when started.
Starting to spell more words and writing them
Not sure
Be able to write their first and last name, reading.
Reading
Begin to see self confidence
Begin reading.

Being able to read.
Reading sight words and beginner books/stories, basic math (counting, single digit adding/subtracting, handwringing, and be capable of actively working/participating in a group.
Not sure
To read, write, add, etc. and to be confident and enjoy those skills.
Letter understanding and sight words
The ability to learn how to learn
Both
Tie his shoes.
How to start reading, know how to write their names, know how to write each letter in the alphabet, know how to write numbers and do basic math, know how to cut shapes, know opposites, know how to introduce themselves to other kids, know the months in the year, know their birthdays. They should know which country we live in, and basic science, like things about their bodies (hearts, lungs, etc.) and different animals.
Children learn the most information in the first 5 years of life and they should have their fundamental blocks to continue to build off of.
I would like my son to have a good understanding of what it means to follow the rules. I want him to understand that he has to be patient, stay on task, and listen to his teacher. I'd like him to understand that he has to be cooperative and be patient because these are definitely two qualities one should possess in life.
Reading - It's a huge part of everyday life.
A positive outlook towards school and homework. I'm not sure what the academic goals are of kindergarten, but also to become more sure of herself as a person
Counting
Having a feeling of I did my best to learn all I needed to and feeling confident that I can expand on those skills in first grade.
enjoy learning new things.
Increased skills in academics, social emotional, and problem solving.
Early reading and writing. All other learning is a struggle until these skills are mastered.
Saying his ABC's
Reading
Problem solving. If a happens, then b, c, and are how I could react and then picking the best solution.
Friendships, let's be honest this is a very important part of school
I guess all, so she's more than ready for the next step
Counting to 10

Basic reading and comprehension as this is the foundation of continuing education.
Social skills.
Reading, math, social
Simple math; reading
Strong ability to sound out letters and blends
Full understanding of what school is, and the basic norms of school. I would want my child to have a desire to learn. Academically, I would want my child to have a foundation to be prepared to enter first grade (basic letter identification, reading and math skills)
Academic skills to read & write
Starting to read simple things, adding & subtracting, good printing of letters, be able to say all sounds correctly
Read simple books
I would like my child to have age appropriate social-emotional skills and a well-balanced amount of academic skills. I feel that my child should know how to read and write their ABC's, count from 1-100, recognize written numbers 1-10, and how to recognize basic site words and basic sentences.
More problem solving or understanding consequences (if that is even appropriate)

As a caregiver what do you believe your role is to help your child become ready for kindergarten?
To be able prepare them for instruction from another adult, personal and social skills
To learn to be respectful and considerate of others, know how to wait your turn and start to learn to control emotions when things "don't go my way".
To be there for the emotionally. They need to see those social and emotional skills all around them. Also to help academically.
To continue to foster what skills our child has developed in pre-school, including continuing to read and recognize letters and words as well as keeping him socially involved with others over the summer.
To help them in all aspects of the classroom experience.
Teaching the basics by reading on a daily basis, playing learning games and exploring.
My role is to use the materials given from school to continue to practice the skills my child is attempting to develop. However, I don't feel that I'm often given an update on what they're working on in school besides a brief monthly overview given at the beginning of the month. So, I'm not sure that I'm allowing him to practice "the right way." It's also my job to ensure that he's happy and healthy so he can focus when he's in class.
Use the tools available to us. Help our children emotionally and socially.
To prepare him as best I can for what may come.

Yes.
Yes, big help specially in securing child feeling that asking teacher help/question is okay.
I believe we play some part with academics, but our greatest role is with supporting their social-emotional growth! I believe we interact with our children in a functional living environment which enables more opportunity for addressing emotions, self-regulation, relationships.
Help them learn what they're going over in school ABC's, counting, writing name, etc.
Helping her maintain a positive attitude towards school, support the school/teacher, develop basic academic, social and emotional skills at home.
Teaching her more stuff
Work with preschool educators to set child up for success in school. Read, sing, play activities to learn. Prepare children for new social situation.
Reading
I believe my role as a caregiver to help my daughter become kindergarten ready is to help her maintain and increase the development she has made during the school year. Such as keeping a her on her routine. Staying on track with her weekly book goals. (she chooses a set number of books she wants to read throughout the week & we read them together) She will be attesting a few summer programs. That will help her sustain/increase her social development. We continue to work on academic studies during the summer as well. We have workbooks that teach her the basics of kindergarten. My daughter loves to learn and explore. We do nature walks, identify birds, snacks, clouds and research them with kid friendly books at the library. I believe doing things like this will help her be ready for kindergarten. My daughter loves to learn.
Helping her maintain a positive attitude towards school, support the school/teacher, develop basic academic, social and emotional skills at home.
Helps with socializing, counting abcs etc.
As a caregiver, I feel my role is guide my child with maturity and social emotional development. I also feel it is important to expose my child to pre-academic skills (not teach explicitly but gain skills through experience).
Assist in homework, engage in the lesson plan and interact with the teacher to know what we need to work on at home, so we have a consistent lesson at home and at school.
Work with her on the appropriate skills that I expect from her
Practice
Being their cheerleader - encouraging them in all aspects of play/school.
Reading to our children daily
Maintain positivity
Practice with them at home and constantly share the world with them. Talk out everything we do.
Sending them to preschool, reading to them daily, and reinforcing at home what they are learning in preschool— giving extra attention to the things they struggle to do.

Model acceptable behaviors, encourage communication skills, practice alphabet (identify, write, sounds), counting, and read to/with them?
Continue what they learn at home and read to them
I believe it is primarily my responsibility to make sure she is kindergarten ready. The school is there to guide and assist, but it first needs to come from home.
I think as a parent I need to work with my child at home so that they can learn and retain the skills needed to progress into kindergarten. Whether that be letters, name writing, sight words and so on...
Encourage and support them whenever they face new changes or challenges
Read and practice simple counting and the alphabet
Work on letters and numbers at home. Read together to help improve vocabulary. Encourage him and give him lots of love.
I believe that parents should always be teaching their kids through play and other ways. I think that the more parents work with their kids to learn, the easier the child will have in school and learning.
I believe my role is to help him on all aspects of kindergarten preparation if possible. While some skills may develop faster than others, I feel my job as a parent is to help my child in as many ways as possible.
To also be a teacher. It is a "responsibility" as a parent. Learning should not be restricted or depended on solely in the classroom.
To give her positive reinforcement about school, instilling the importance of school, and giving support to my child & teachers
At home learning
It's a huge role. I believe in reading every day as well as doing letter, number, problem solving and many other activities that will give my child a most successful start.
be positive about learning so they know how much fun it can be to learn.
It is my responsibility to personally instruct my child as well as provide academic and experiential opportunities for my children.
Read at home. Help build friendships outside of school.
My role is to make sure he is comfortable being in a new setting around a lot of new faces and to feel confident
Read to my child, encourage questioning, ask questions that require mathematical thinking, teach social skills necessary to get along with other kids and teachers
Reading with them, preparing them for what their new routine will look like, continue to work on academic skills.
Character, early literacy skills, self-help skills
Practice the things she may need
Reinforce school teachings

Everything. We cannot rely on the school system/pre-k to do so because there are far too many academic and social-emotional spectrums for them to be responsible. Unfortunately, even if a teacher wants to give every child individual attention, they cannot and therefore it is a parent's job to ready their child for any new environments.
To encourage learning every day.
Confidence
Reading to the child; encouragement;
Encourage learning at any opportunity and praise their accomplishments
I feel it is my job to model skills like self-regulation and begin working on skills like reading/math. I feel I also should be reinforcing skills and lessons learned at preschool to help my child be more prepared.
Help with homework & follow-up from preschool activities so what they learn there continues to grow after hours
Talk about it , work on numbers and letters during the summer
Providing opportunities, teaching, reinforcement, discipline, setting safe boundaries
Recite ABCs, numbers, and read to them on a daily basis. Playing outside and doing board games with them is also important. Talk about day and feelings.
Using everyday situations and real-life experiences for teaching.

What role do you believe preschool has in helping a child get ready for kindergarten?
Social emotional
To assist in beginning to work with their same aged peers and develop foundation academic skills.
To help assist the parents with the social emotional part. Sharing, feelings and peer relationships
Introducing them to a classroom setting without making it too structured or focused on academic skills, but rather "learning through play."
To assist in the academic skills and especially the social emotional aspect
I think preschool helps by getting used to a routine in a school environment. Preschool helps teach my child the basics in a fun learning environment!
I believe that preschool's role is to provide structured activities that allow my son to develop skills.
I would want it to be more social readiness as opposed to test and score based.
It's helps children ease into school.
Pre-school is a good pre-cursor for kindergarten. Kids practice sounds, learn colors, and all other skills to be successful in kindergarten
Social, emotional is very important in little kids and they do a good job.

Utilizing “play” to work on academics as well as supporting social-emotional development in that setting (adults, classmates, different scenarios that may not present themselves in home setting).
Social aspects, learning the foundations of counting, alphabet, writing names, etc.
Preschool should meet kids where they’re at educationally. Some kids need more of the social piece while others need more of the academics. Preschool programs should address student needs to let that guide their instruction rather than doing the same programming each year.
Learning how to count and the alphabet and writing name
Set up the fundamental skills that need to be developed for school.
Vocabulary, learning to be around other students’ daily life skills
I believe I answered that in a previous response. To sum it up; preschool is a great way to help a child get ready for kindergarten. It teaches them the basics. They get the have the experience of school without so much pressure. They have more time to develop socially. Preschool is play based learning. So, they learn to work and play together which builds a strong foundation for how they view each other, the staff and ultimately school. More than likely they will attend preschool at the same school they will attend kindergarten, so it’s nice to see familiar faces walking down the halls as well. A familiar gym, playground, lunchroom. If they have fond memories of a place, they won’t be so nervous and or scared to go to a new grade.
Preschool should meet kids where they’re at educationally. Some kids need more of the social piece while others need more of the academics. Preschool programs should address student needs to let that guide their instruction rather than doing the same programming each year.
Same as above
Pre-school is teaching children school readiness skills (i.e., sit in a circle, take turns, work with peers). I believe it should be play based.
Making school a place they want to go, helping them understand the basis of numbers and letters and what will be expected and different in Kindergarten.
Developing social skills and learning the prerequisites for kindergarten
Practice
Builds relationships, helps with social skills.
Preparing them socially especially if they are not in daycare.
Just being in the building is huge
Giving them confidence and getting them ready to learn. Once they are comfortable with the environment and new people they will learn better.
They have completely prepared both of my children.
Introduce the children to group learning settings, establish academic foundation additional (practice with letter studies and counting through games/play time).
I think it plays a huge role. My kids were so much more prepared to actually go to school by the time they hit kindergarten

I think it helps to fill in the gaps that we miss at home, both academic and socially. Sometimes just having a different doing that instruction makes all of the difference.
I think preschool helps a child emotionally and socially prepare for kindergarten.
Getting them used to being part of a group of children, be able to work together as a team as well as independently. Also, to provide a learning environment through various methods of play and teaching
Preparing for classroom setting
Helps them be in a structured environment. Kind of a soft run for kindergarten.
I think that it is a great way to introduce kids to the classroom setting and to know that they will need to sit down and start learning instead of playing the whole time. I think that it is a good way to introduce them to other kids in a classroom setting, they will begin to learn the school routine in a good amount of time for their ability to focus and learn
I believe preschool helps in multiple ways when preparing for kindergarten. While I feel preschool helps a child prepare somewhat academically, I feel preschool is when children truly start having a better understanding of social skills. Examples : sharing, storytelling, playing games with each other, etc.
Extremely beneficial
I think preschool gave her so much more tools for kindergarten than I could have. She had interventions with Ms. Krystal and can count to 100 and write her names! That's amazing!
Majorly
I think it's a great foundation to start with. Kids get pretty excited, at that age, when it's school time. I think it's good for building those early social relationships.
helps with socializing. they see how much fun learning can be
It is crucial in giving children exposure and practice for the school setting while learning in all developmental areas.
Same, building relationships as well as working on academics.
It prepares them socially
Structure of a classroom, early reading steps, encouraging the love of learning
Working on relationships with peers, working on academic skills
Self-help skills, early literacy skills, early math skills,
Same
Big role
Children benefit from having a different adult provide structure and rules other than their parents. They also benefit from learning how a classroom runs in an organized manner and how to interact with children they are unfamiliar with.
To have a smooth and positive transition into kindergarten.
To have a smooth and positive transition into kindergarten.
Everything I can't do

Social and early skills
Laying the basics of learning and helping the child find fun in learning
I feel preschool is a place for my child to learn the skills needed to be prepared to kindergarten. This would include modeling what a day in kindergarten would be like, reinforcing skills needed for kindergarten, helping to grow social/emotionally and develop positive relationships with other children/adults.
A very big role, socially & academically to help focus, learning to learn and socialize
Working with others, taking turns, learning numbers and letters
Helping with social interactions, teaching letters number colors
Story time, review and recite ABC's, review and recite numbers, work on social skills, imaginative play, outdoor play, arts and crafts, fine motor skills, cut with scissors, etc.
Structure in learning

Do you believe your child is ready for Kindergarten? Please explain
My now 1st grader, yes. My 3 (almost 4-year-old) no. She is not ready. She just needs more time to mature and grow.
Well, he's only three so, not yet :)
Nope, 1 she's too young, and 2 she doesn't have an understanding on the social emotional skills
Yes. Our child is introverted but he had a wonderful pre-school experience by developing new skills and branching out some. He is excited about the upcoming kindergarten year.
If they can show me, they can share, control their emotions and interact with peers for the most part.
Yes!
No. He's only 3. :) He'll have one more year before he's ready though I do believe he's well on track.
No. Emotional and separation issues still need to be worked on.
Yes! He can spell his name & a few other words & is learning to read already.
No - he is only 9 months old.
Yes, she had an approachable and knowledgeable teacher.
Yes
Yes, he can write his name, he is getting better about what is socially acceptable for his age, he knows most of his letters.
Yes. She is eager, excited and academically, socially, and emotionally prepared for kindergarten.
Yes, I do she has been working hard by counting and saying the alphabet and along with many things
My 5-year-old was ready when she started. My 3-year-old is not ready.

No
I believe my daughter is kindergarten ready. She possesses all the necessary/desired skills that are suggested they have before they start kindergarten. She has been through ECFE, discovery time and 2 years of school readiness. She has grown tremendously socially from discovery time to the end of school readiness.
Yes. She is eager, excited and academically, socially, and emotionally prepared for kindergarten.
No- he's only 7months ;)
Yes- I believe my children is ready to be in a classroom setting and learn academics. I still have concerns about maturity, but I believe that will happen over the course of his kindergarten year.
Yes. Her social emotional development is still a work in progress, but I believe with more structure she will thrive. Her love for academics and that she is in line with her peers makes me confident to send her to kindergarten, if she was to stay in preschool I fear she would get bored with the academics and become complacent and lose focus on that part of the school and focus on the fun that they have.
Absolutely!! The preschool teacher said she is very ready
Yes
Yes, even though she isn't ready to leave Miss Connie 😊 (neither are we)
Yes, but we will hold our child back one more year as we have done with all of our children.
No
My child has one more year of preschool (school readiness) but I feel confident she will be ready for kindergarten.
Yes. Our preschool program is amazing, and my kids have both been very ready!
Yes, nearly. While we have two years to improve, our child already has little trouble with our academic expectations but will need to improve fine motor skills and attention span.
Yes, preschool structure gets them ready for kindergarten
Yes. She is only 4, but she is already asking to go to kindergarten. She will have another year of preschool, and by that time she will be academically and socially ready for sure. She loves school and I think that going to preschool this past year helped to instill that.
No, my child is only three.
I would have said yes. I believe my child is ready, however after looking into early entrance to kindergarten and getting my child tested the results showed that it would be best to continue another year of preschool
No, he is 2
I am unsure. He is very young and I feel like he would benefit from repeating another year of preschool so he has more time to learn and grow
If she had to be yes, but I would prefer to wait another year until she is a little older. I feel like there is more that we as parents can teach her before she goes to kindergarten. I wouldn't want her to get behind the other kids and get frustrated if she couldn't complete the tasks.

Not at this point. Since he is only two, he still has time to improve on many developmental/social skills over the next few years.
Yes!
I hope so :) I think she has a positive attitude about school and recognizes letters and numbers.
No
We have a couple of years before that leap but yes, I do believe that my child is ready. We work very hard as a family to incorporate all the basics that we feel will get our child off to a great start.
He/she has one more year of preschool, then she will be ready
I believe that my child is academically ready, but we are choosing to wait another year for social maturity and a summer birthday.
Yes. He is very shy, but also has some friendships. Has a good academic foundation.
Yes and no, mentally I believe he is, socially he can be shy and scared of new places and people
Yes. He is academically ready (reading short stories and thinking through more complex problems) and socially is ready to learn in a classroom setting.
Yes, she has peers that she calls friends, she can play with other kids when they ask, she asks other kids to play, she can decline to play with people when she wants to play alone, she participates in activities offered to her, she is excited to go to Kindergarten and talks about it frequently, when asked she says she wants to go to Kindergarten
My youngest is 3 so no I would say she is not ready.
Yes, I am told she does well where she is going
Yes, I feel what is coming up a little short now will come with time.
Yes - academically. Still needs help with self-regulation/environmental anxieties at times.
No
No
No, he's only 3.
Maybe
My child was ready when she entered, and second child hasn't reached that level yet.
No. I feel my child is still learning the skills needed for him to become kindergarten ready.
yes, very soon, age permitting
Yes, needs projects to occupy his brain and expand his knowledge
Yes

Yes, I do believe my child is ready for kindergarten. However, 4's Preschool will be beneficial to him to review all the skills he learned in 3's preschool. He still has some anxiety and also difficulty with getting out what he wants to say. For example, he will get stuck on a word/idea and have difficulty trying to put into words what he is trying to say. He also knows how to verbalize the alphabet, numbers 1-15, and months of the year but doesn't always recognize them in written form.

He is making great advances in many ways. I'm amazed every day. But no, he would not be re ready now for preschool

Teacher Responses

What is your top academic goal for a child entering kindergarten?
Children are able to recognize, identify and form letters, numbers and shapes and label letter sounds
I would like for them to know their letter names and sounds.
Being able to recognize their name, have an idea of how to use writing utensils/scissors, count to 5
Being able to recognize and label the letters in the alphabet.
Growth!
Recognizing/writing letters in their name
Name writing, numbers 1-10, shapes and colors.
To be interested in learning!
number recognition
Have a handle on alphabet, colors, numbers and shapes
Letter & Number Recognition
Recognize and write name
To be able to attend and follow directions.
Firm set of preliteracy fundamentals
Writing and Recognizing name
Upon entering Kindergarten, I want the preschoolers that I have to be able to write their name along with identifying those letters in their name.
Letter names and sounds
That they can recognize their name and a few letters, ideally ALL letters
To know letters, numbers, shapes and nursery rhymes
Able to process and answer questions appropriately
Composing and decomposing numbers

Early Literacy Skills
To be able to participate within the classroom setting in some manner
The ability to recognize and write their name.
Attending for longer periods of time.
Literacy
Social/emotional development and awareness
Name-be able to recognize their name, write their name, and recognize the letters in their name.
They have some familiarity with most letters & numbers to 20 along with writing & recognizing their name.
To hear beginning and ending sounds in words.
Letter, letter sound, and number recognition
Letter recognition
Know their letters and sounds
Pre-Writing and Pre- Reading skills
Be able to recognize all the letters of the alphabet.
Sitting and listening - follow directions
They have some letter and number sense.
To learn to read
Know all letters of alphabet
Children understanding the letters in the alphabet, letter sounds, and familiar with the letter in their own name.
My top Academic School for students is to grow from whatever level they come to preschool at with their knowledge and experience with academic skills such as the alphabet, numbers, colors or science Concepts.

What is your top social-emotional goal for a child entering kindergarten?
Student is able to name emotions and feelings, practice self-calming skills and interacts appropriately with peers.
To be able to follow directions and rules without negative behaviors or resistance.
Being able to identify their feelings, being able to sit for 20 minutes while listening to a story, and being able to follow 1-2 step directions
If I only have to pick one, I would have to say the ability to deal with transitions throughout the day.
Growth - confidence, friendship, love of learning/school

Being able to vocalize a problem, how they are feeling, and then figuring out how they can fix it.
Interacts positively with peers
Can the child interact appropriately with other children, can the child sit and listen to a story, can the child self soothe, can the child follow directions
Separates from parent easily
Sharing, personal emotion and peer relationships
Following directions & understanding other's feelings
Follow directions
Self-regulation. self-control
Developmentally appropriate self-regulation
Problem solving on their own
Self-control and self-awareness.
Sharing, able to express how they feel and why
That they are prepared to learn to share, take turns, make friends and keep them.
To be social/emotionally ready for Kindergarten!
Ability to listen/ be attentive
Knowing how to solve conflict
Self-Regulation
As a speech-language pathologist my top social-emotional goal would be communication. The ability for a child to express wants/needs and to interact with peers.
The ability to regulate their own emotions and take care of needs appropriately.
Self-regulation
Managing feelings & needs
handling disappointment/not getting their way
Independence
The ability to socially interact with others & separate from parent/caregiver easily
To be able to follow the routine of the class without minimal teacher support.
Ability to play and interact with others
Ability to listen to adults
Be able to get along with others
Self-Regulation
A child should be able to separate from the parent with little to no frustration.

Love for school and learning
They can detach from parents.
To share and focus on others
Getting along well with friends
All children feel a sense of security, trust, and are happy to be in school.
To be able to interact successfully with same age peers, and also to communicate with familiar adults who are non-relatives.

What area do you find more important for a child entering kindergarten, to have academic development or social-emotional development? Please explain.
Social- emotional development- If a child is able to self-regulate, identify feelings and emotions, and is able to sit attentively at group time, the kindergarten teacher will be more successful teaching his/her lesson.
Social/emotional development; they have to be ready and willing to learn and when they are better able to gain those academic skills.
I believe that it is more important for a child to have more social-emotional development because in the long run, the children with better social-emotional skills are better adapted to change, have the self-advocacy skills, are better team players, and are just more well-rounded.
Social emotional because the children need to be able to deal with their emotions before they can learn. The academics will come if the social emotional is on key.
Social-emotional - when they have that, academics follow easier.
Social-emotional development. If a child does not have social-emotional skills, they will not be able to learn academics. Once the social-emotion skills fall into place, the academic skills will follow.
Social-emotional. Often times adults forget how to talk/play with children so when they come to school, interacting with others is difficult for them. They are only 5 before kindergarten, so let kids be kids!
Social emotional. If they are able to sit, listen, follow directions and self soothe, the academic piece will fall into place. If they are not able to do those social emotional pieces, learning is way more difficult.
Social emotional development, if the social comfort level is there then they are ready to invest in their academic focus.
Social-emotional
Social Emotional Dev. - They have to come to K ready to learn and have the basic skills needed to get along with others, follow directions, have empathy etc...
Social-Emotional- It is more important for students to be able to function in their environment. The academic development will come if the child has a strong social-emotional base.
Social-emotional development: if the child has these skills in place, they will be able to attend and focus to improve their academic development.
Both - I am confident both can happen simultaneously

Social- Emotional Development
Social emotional development, it impacts all other areas of learning.
Social emotional - We can then teach the academics to them.
Social emo because if they are crying for mom, or afraid of school, it's hard!
To be social-emotionally ready because if they aren't ready, it will be very hard to teach them.
Social emotional- if they are emotionally ready, they will pick up on the academics easier
Social emotional development because if they have not developed socially or emotionally it will get in the way of their learning.
Social-emotional; Without a good grasp on social-emotional skills, it is difficult for students to learn.
Social-emotional; they are better able to participate in academic learning if they are able to interact with both staff and other students and to attend within a classroom setting.
Social-emotional development, as it lays the foundation for learning to occur.
Social-emotional: Academics might not matter if a child is struggling emotionally.
Social-emotional. They will need these skills to navigate any frustrations and problems they may come across.
Social/emotional development. I feel kids can't learn to their fullest potential until they have appropriate social/emotional development
Social emotional-a child needs to be socially and emotionally stable before they can handle retaining academic material. Their mind needs to be in the right place first.
Social-emotional: rooted in the basic of the hierarchy of needs. children need to be stable/secure in social/emotional areas before they can learn the academics
Social-emotional. I think it is important for a child to be able to self-regulate and have positive interactions with other students. If they are not able to do these things, it interferes with their ability to be fully engaged in the academics.
Both are helpful but being socially and emotionally developmental is most important to me.
Social emotional so they are able to learn
Social emotional development- this way they are able to ask for help from peers and not just teachers and the learning and memorizing of materials will come faster for them.
Social Development...if they are socially ready, they can become academic ready.
I want to say both, but if I had to pick one it would be social emotional development. A child who is healthy in this area will usually pick up on the academics pretty quickly.
Social-emotional - if they are emotionally and socially ready, learning will happen
Both are equally important, but I'd say social-emotional first...they can get extra help academic wise if needed.

Social emotional development. Because the academics will come down the road.
Social-emotional development because when this is in place the academic part will come more easily
Once children are socially and emotionally ready to learn I feel they can move on to the academic development that is required. They need to have basic understanding of routine, structure, self- help skills, and feel safe before they can move on to other learning.
I find Social-emotional development more important. Once children are able to identify their feelings and verbalize or express those feelings, it is easier for them to be in a place that they are ready for academic development.

What one skill would you want every child to have upon completion of kindergarten? Why?
Actively participates in classroom activities, shows independent skills and is developmentally on track academically.
The basic reading skills of letter names and sounds, and basic sight words as they really start reading more in 1st grade.
The main skill I would like to see students leave upon completing kindergarten is to have self-regulation strategies. I feel that this is important because if children can't control their emotions and bodies, there will be limited learning and retention of the academic skills needed to succeed once they become an adult.
The ability to compromise or at least have an arsenal of things they could use to function in a group. This is a life skill that all kiddos need!
Reading!
To be able to use social-emotional skills without prompting.
Other than being socially active with peers, develop a consistent and positive work habit.
In our school, being able to blend sounds to read words.
Sight word recognition or low-level reader, first grade seems to have a big push on reading
Talking about feelings and others feeling
At completion of preschool, I would like them to be socially/emotionally ready for kindergarten and the expectations that they have. At completion of kindergarten, I would want them to be more mature socially and emotionally as well as gained academic skills needed to succeed in 1st grade.
Being able to persevere- having the confidence and ability to keep going can help the child get through many challenges.
Self-regulation. Again, if a child is able to demonstrate emotional control of him/herself, they will be able to continue to improve their academic development needed for 1st grade. Emotional control is the basis for future learning.
Firm letter sound knowledge with phonological awareness skill
Knowledge of Alphabet- basic reading skills.

Letters, names and sounds along with some number sense. To prepare them for first grade.
Ability to read. Every subject in school involves reading.
To read, that is our goal
To be able to read! Will help them in all areas in the years ahead!
Ability to share and work together with others
Knowing their letter names and sounds because that is a foundational skill for the rest of life.
Express their wants and needs; When basic needs are met, students can learn.
Ability to express wants and needs.
Uses and appreciates books and exhibits emergent reading skills.
Confidence in their own reading ability. To decrease the struggle, they feel moving forward in grades.
Solid social skills.
Age appropriate coping skills so they can handle disappointment and focus on academic learning
Reading-If a child is beginning to read by the end of Kindergarten, that would tell me that they are understanding concept of print, letter recognition, letter sounds, and comprehension.
Social/emotional: ability to accept when things don't go their way academic: concrete knowledge of letter sounds
To be able to join a group of children or invite someone to play with them.
Reading and decoding
Reading/decoding words
Reading skills- When out in public or at home there's signs everywhere and its important for them to be able to read .
Self-Regulation and Self-Worth
To be able to read short sentences and recognize a number of sight words. This is the foundation for learning.
Listen and respect for adults
Proficient in letter blending and numbers.
Kindness, but that's not truly a skill! Good large and small motor skills because having that, helps the child learn in many ways.
To know all letters and sounds and to have some reading ability because it will help them in first grade
I feel it's important that they feel positive about school and the classroom they are in. Feeling good about themselves and being motivated is the first step.
I think being able to interact with other humans is very important. That is a skill that I would want children to have on the completion of kindergarten. As social beings, we will always have to interact with others whether it's friends, teachers, mentors or family.

What role do you feel preschool has in helping a child get ready for kindergarten?
Providing an opportunity for peer interaction, exposure to academic skills and a fun school experience.
It helps them start learning to follow classroom rules, procedures, routines, and transitions. It gives them practice sitting and listening to a teacher. It also helps them learn to interact with their peers, which if they are only at home they may not learn.
I believe that the preschool's role is to help foster the social-emotional skills such as sitting for 20 minutes, following 1-2 step directions, and everything listed previously.
We are providing the opportunities to practice the skills they will need to succeed in the world today!
solid academic foundation, social aspect (know friends), adjustment to school schedule!
Preschool should be an introduction to school. It should be teaching children how to play with another child, how to have a conversation with others, and being able to communicate. I think we should be introducing academic skills to children, not trying to make sure they are proficient in them.
A major role! We are helping craft little minds from washing hands, to writing names, to simple math problems. Schools often want students to be "kindergarten ready" when years ago you learned all of those things in kindergarten. Preschool is now the place where you learn all those things. Preschool has a huge role in being kindergarten ready.
Preschool does a great job of teaching those social emotional skills. When they know how to do those things, teaching the academics is a lot easier!
Builds/creates social emotional situations, introduces academic basics to kids (colors, shapes, numbers 1-10)
The social aspects that they need
I feel preschool's primary goal is to prepare a child socially and emotionally for kindergarten so they can start their formal educational years ready to learn. Academics are also important, and I feel strongly in teaching those as well, however, first and foremost are social/emotional skills.
Preschool should work on learning readiness skills such as listening, following directions, and sharing. They should also work to introduce some of the academic skills as kids are ready for them.
Preschool is important for giving children opportunities to interact with other children, to follow routines, to listen.... all of which are important skills for entering kindergarten.
Social/emotional readiness, instill a love for learning, confidence, and academic skill
Prepares the children for academic success for in the future and gives the child knowledge of how to act in school and the basic school rules.
I feel it is a huge role in readiness! We prepare the kids socially, emotionally and academically for the rigors of today's kindergarten.
Expose them to routines, playing together, sense of self and some academics.
Teaching soc-emo, numbers, letters in name, cooperative play
It gives them a jump start in the world ahead of them not only academically, but social emotionally!
Exposing them to all the academics and providing plenty of opportunities for play and socialization.

It teaches them some of the structure that is expected in kindergarten.
Gets them in the groove of routine following, sitting for 15+ minutes, completing an assigned activity before moving on to activity of choice, expands their social skills, etc.
As both a professional and a parent the impact preschool has in preparing students for the future truly is priceless. By providing diverse experiences focused on play-based learning it is evident that students grow in areas of social, motor, academic, and communication. Students learn routine, they learn how to problem-solve, how to participate, and most of all they develop a sense of self-confidence.
To provide a strong foundation of social-emotional skills to encourage a love of learning.
Helping children learn how to be a member of a large group, understand classroom structure, and ignite their motivation to learn new skills.
Providing school experiences with materials to build fine motor strength and to familiarize them with daily routines, as well as social skills since they don't get very much of that in elementary schools.
We work a lot on social/emotional skills, showing students how to sit and listen, how to play with friends, how to share and independent skills.
I feel like one of the roles that preschool has in helping children get ready for Kindergarten is confidence. Children should leave preschool and enter Kindergarten knowing what is going to happen, what they will learn, and what is expected of them.
Providing them with exposure to the school routine & expectations. a baseline knowledge of letter, numbers, fine motor (cutting, pencil grip).
I think it is important for children to have experience with the structure of the classroom, and to be able to separate from their caregivers. If a child is able to be independent in following the routines, taking care of themselves, and following basic rules, then they will be able to be better focused and ready to learn.
Social-emotional development, ability to play and share, letter & number recognition, following routines and rules.
Some letter and sound recognition and some number and counting skills
I feel preschool plays a huge roll in getting kids ready for kindergarten. We work on colors, shapes, letter recognition, letter sounds, reading, writing, sitting at a group time, taking turns, social skills.
They know what is expected of them at school and have both academic and social emotional exposure.
Preschool plays a HUGE role in getting children ready for Kindergarten. They are setting the stage for routine and structure that the child will need in the future.
Prepares them to listen, follow directions and hopefully love school
It introduces most of the skills they are asked to be proficient in when they finish Kindergarten.
Lots! Preschool should give children lots of play time, interaction, practice with problem solving, ... all the things we continue to work on in kindergarten to help raise conscientious, kind, thoughtful children .
Preschool is very important for social-emotional development and pre-academic skills which are needed in Kindergarten. The children learn how to sit, listen to teachers, and get along with peers. Preschool is necessary for these beginning skills which future grades will build upon.

Preschool is extremely important to future success in school. If you start children out on the right path in preschool and help them get ready to learn then I feel you will see an easier transition into Kindergarten.

I think preschool is a mix of both social-emotional development and academic development. In my experience kids who aren't socially emotionally developed or ready at an age appropriate level, struggle to develop academically at the same level of their peers who may be more socially emotionally developed. I think the role of a preschool program is to meet each child where they're at and help them grow from there.

Appendix B: Survey Items

TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE

I am conducting a study comparing how teachers and caregivers view kindergarten readiness skill. Please complete this anonymous survey using google forms. Your responses will be used to put data together from a teacher's perspective of what a child needs to be kindergarten ready. I appreciate your willingness and time to do this!

Demographics

What grade level do you teach? (check all that apply)

- a. Preschool (age 3)
- b. Preschool (age 4-5)
- c. Kindergarten

What is your education level?

- d. Some college
- e. Bachelor Degree
- f. Masters Degree

How long have you been teaching?

- g. 1-3 years
- h. 4-6 years
- i. 7-10 years
- j. 11-15 years
- k. 15-20 years
- l. 20-25 years
- m. 25+ years

- 1. What is your top academic goal for a child entering kindergarten?**
- 2. What is your top social-emotional goal for a child entering kindergarten?**
- 3. What area do you find more important for a child entering kindergarten, to have academic development or social-emotional development? Please explain.**

4. **What one skill would you like every child to have upon completion of kindergarten? Why?**
5. **What role do you feel preschool has in helping a child be ready for kindergarten?**

CAREGIVER QUESTIONNAIRE

As an educator I want to know what you think your child needs to be kindergarten ready. Please complete this anonymous survey using Google Forms. Your responses will be used to put data together from a caregiver's perspective. I appreciate honest responses!

Demographics

How many children do you have?

- a. 1
- b. 2
- c. 3
- d. 4+

Age of your child(ren)? (check all that apply)

- e. 0-12 months
- f. 1
- g. 2
- h. 3
- i. 4
- j. 5
- k. 6
- l. 7+

Has your child attended any of these opportunities? (check all that apply)

- Preschool
- Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE) classes
- Sunday School
- Family Childcare
- Early Headstart
- Other:_____

What is your highest level of education?

- m. Less than high school
 - n. High school or GED
 - o. Some college
 - p. Bachelor's Degree
 - q. Master's Degree
1. What academic skill or goal would you want for your child to have before entering Kindergarten? Why?
 2. What social-emotional goals do you have for your child entering Kindergarten? (Examples: relationships, self-regulation, emotions, etc.)
 3. What area do you find more important for a child entering kindergarten, to have academic development or social-emotional development? Please explain.
 4. What skill would you want your child to have upon completion of kindergarten? Why?
 5. As a caregiver what do you believe your role is to help your child become ready for kindergarten?
 6. What role do you believe preschool has in helping your child be ready for kindergarten?
 7. Do you believe your child is ready for Kindergarten? Please explain.

Appendix C: Adult Consent Form

Kindergarten Readiness Implied Informed Consent

You are invited to participate in a research study related to kindergarten readiness in children as perceived by teachers and caregivers. You were selected as a possible participant because you are a caregiver of a child birth to six, or a teacher in preschool or kindergarten. This research project is being conducted by Holly Johnson to satisfy the requirements of a Master's Degree in Child and Family Studies.

Background Information and Purpose

The purpose of this study is to compare perspectives of teachers and caregivers in what it means for children to be kindergarten ready.

Procedures

If you decide to participate, you will be asked to complete the online survey which is completely anonymous so no one will be able to identify a specific individual's form. Please note that Google Forms collects IP addresses for analytic purposes, if this is a concern you have the option to not complete.

Risks

There are no foreseeable risks associated with participation in this study.

Benefits

There are no benefits to the survey participants.

Confidentiality

Information obtained in connection with this study is confidential and will be reported as aggregated (group) results. To prevent identification of research subjects, data will be presented in aggregate form of with no more than 1-2 descriptors presented together.

Research Results

At your request, I am happy to provide a summary of the research results when the study is completed. Upon completion, my thesis will be placed on file at St. Cloud State University's Learning Resources Center. . The research documents will be deleted after the project is complete.

Contact Information

If you have any additional questions please contact me, at hrjohnson@stcloudstate.edu, or my advisor, JoAnn Johnson , at jojohnson@stcloudstate.edu.

Voluntary Participation/Withdrawal

Participation is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future position with the district or the relation of researcher. If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time without penalty.

Acceptance to Participate

Your completion of the survey indicates that you are at least 18 years of age, you have read the information provided above, and you consent to participate in the study. If you are interested in learning the results of the survey, feel free to contact me at hrjohnson@stcloudstate.edu.

Appendix D: Email Cover Letter to Participants

Initial Email

Dear Survey Participants,

I am in the process of completing my Master's Degree at St. Cloud State University. As part of my thesis, I am conducting research on the topic of what it means to be kindergarten ready, from the perspectives of teachers and caregivers. I would like your input on this topic to assist me in conducting my research. I'll be sending a survey out to you via email using google forms and therefore your answers will be confidential. I would appreciate your willingness to assist me by completing this survey. Thank you in advance for your participation.

Sincerely,

Holly Johnson

Follow-Up Email

Dear Survey Participants,

This is a follow up email regarding the survey that was sent to you via google forms. If you have already completed the survey, I thank you. If you have not yet completed the survey, would you please take a few minutes to do so by the end of the week? Thank you.

Survey Link: <https://goo.gl/forms/R1VoSyZjaxDe95WF2>

Thank you,

Holly Johnson